

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 7764**

**BILL NUMBER: HB 2061**

**DATE PREPARED:** Jan 25, 1999

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Insurance Premium Tax reduction.

**FISCAL ANALYST:** Brian Tabor

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**FUNDS AFFECTED: X GENERAL  
DEDICATED  
FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State

**Summary of Legislation:** This bill reduces the Insurance Premium Tax from 2.0% to 1.5% over a five year phase-in period.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 1999.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** The Department of Revenue and the Department of Insurance will have some administrative expenses associated with making the changes on tax forms, instructions and computer programming.

**Explanation of State Revenues:** The Insurance Premium Tax is assessed on gross premiums received on policies covering risks in the state of Indiana. The tax base is comprised of premiums written or renewed in the past year minus deductions of reinsurance premiums, dividends paid to resident insureds, and premiums returned. The tax rate is currently 2.0% of these net premiums. The tax is paid by all insurance companies doing business in Indiana, however, companies domiciled in Indiana may elect to pay the Corporate Gross Income Tax in lieu of the Premium Tax. Revenue from the Premium Tax is deposited in the state General Fund.

Reducing the Premium Tax rate could affect revenues from the Insurance Premium Tax, the Gross Income Tax, and the Supplemental Net Income Tax as follows:

*Insurance Premium Tax:* A reduction in the Insurance Premium Tax rate may affect domestic insurance companies differently than out-of-state entities:

(1) *Effect on domestic companies:* Decreasing the Insurance Premium Tax rate by 25% would not simply reduce the amount of tax due on premiums written in Indiana by the same rate. This is partly because domestic companies may elect to pay the Corporate Gross Income Tax in lieu of the Premium Tax. In fact,

of the more than 130 insurance companies domiciled in Indiana, only 39 currently elect to pay the insurance Premium Tax. Only \$4,556,824 in Premium Tax was paid by Indiana domiciled insurance companies in 1997. If the Premium Tax rate is lowered, more companies may find it advantageous to pay the Premium Tax, simultaneously reducing gross income tax revenue.

(2) *Effect on insurance companies not domiciled in Indiana:* The impact on out-of-state insurance companies varies with each state of domicile. This is due to Indiana's retaliatory tax provision, which provides that premiums written in Indiana by a company not domiciled in Indiana are taxed at either Indiana's rate or the rate in that company's home state, whichever is higher. The varying effects of the retaliatory provision are outlined in the following paragraphs:

(a) *Rates of 2.0% and above:* Premium Tax revenue collected from companies domiciled in states with a rate of 2.0% or higher would not change, no matter how low Indiana's rate was set. Because of the retaliatory provision, Indiana would collect at the higher of the two rates, which would still be at least 2.0%.

(b) *Rates between 2.0% and 1.5%:* Under this bill, Indiana will lose some revenue from companies in states where the Premium Tax rate is below 2.0% but above 1.5%. Connecticut, for example, has a rate of 1.75%. Under current law, the tax on premiums written by Connecticut companies in Indiana would be assessed at 2.0%. After a change in Indiana's rate to 1.5%, taxes on Connecticut premiums would be collected at 1.75%, the higher of the two rates. The retaliatory provision mitigates the potential loss with companies from states with Premium Tax rates between 2.0% and 1.5%,

(c) *Rates below 1.5%:* For companies domiciled in states with rates below 1.5%, the effect would be to reduce taxes paid in Indiana by 25%. The highest rate that would be applied would now be 1.5%, not 2.0%.

Although the retaliatory provision mitigates the potential loss, Premium Tax revenue from out-of-state companies would likely decrease whenever the rate is lowered. The net effect depends heavily on how many domestic companies switch to paying the Premium Tax rather than the gross income tax. The impact of the proposed rate change on insurance Premium Tax revenue was estimated using a model that included the retaliatory tax effects. Several important assumptions were made:

- Although this bill proposes a five year phase-in by reducing the rate by 0.1% each year until 2004, the full impact of a 0.5% reduction was assumed to happen all at once to demonstrate the maximum effect of this proposal.
- Based on recently proposed or enacted legislation, changes in the Premium Tax rates in neighboring states were incorporated in the model. The new rates that were applied were: 1.4% in Ohio; 1.5% in Kentucky; 1.5% in Illinois; and 1.3% in Michigan. All other states were assumed to maintain the same rates imposed in 1997.
- The majority of Indiana domestic insurance companies do not pay the insurance Premium Tax. If the rate was lowered, some companies may elect to pay the Premium Tax. However, it was estimated that a 1.5% rate may not be sufficient for all companies to make this transition. For the estimates presented here, it was assumed that no additional companies would pay the Premium Tax.

Given the assumptions stated above, lowering the insurance Premium Tax rate from 2.0% to 1.5% would cause an annual reduction of \$26.8 M in Premium Tax revenue. The Department of Insurance (DOI) has estimated that such a change would generate a reduction of \$27.8 M. The discrepancy between these projections results from the decision to use actual taxes paid by Indiana domestic insurance companies in the model, rather than projected taxes due (used in DOI's estimate).

*Corporate gross income tax:* The corporate gross income tax is normally assessed on the total gross receipts of a corporation's transactions in Indiana. However, not all of the gross receipts of an insurance company are taxed under the corporate gross income tax. The tax rate is 1.2%, and revenue from this tax is deposited into the state General Fund.

Only 39 of the insurance companies domiciled in Indiana currently elect to pay the insurance Premium Tax. The remaining companies pay a total of approximately \$30 M in gross income taxes. If the Premium Tax is reduced, more companies will find it advantageous to pay the Premium Tax, reducing gross income tax revenue. In the model used for this analysis, however, no companies were projected to switch to the premiums tax.

Additional analysis is currently being performed to determine how many companies would switch from paying the gross income tax if the Premium Tax rate is reduced to 1.5%. If many companies do indeed switch, gross income tax revenue would fall and the projected loss in Premium Tax revenue would be offset as more companies paid this tax. The information presented in this analysis will be updated as more precise estimates become available.

*Supplemental net income tax:* Supplemental net income tax (SNIT) liability is specially calculated for domestic insurance companies. The tax base is the federal taxable income of the company adjusted by:

- (Step 1) Multiplying the federal taxable income by the ratio of premiums tax receipts from policies insuring persons or property in Indiana to total premiums receipts; and
- (Step 2) subtracting the company's gross income tax liability or the gross premiums tax liability, depending on which one the company has elected to pay.

The adjusted tax base as calculated above would then be multiplied by the SNIT rate of 4.5% to determine tax liability. SNIT revenue is deposited in the state General Fund.

If an insurance company switched from paying the Premium Tax or gross income tax to the other because the taxes due would be less, the amount that would be subtracted in Step 2 would be smaller, resulting in greater SNIT liability. The DOR estimates that in CY 1996, \$18.4 M in SNIT was paid by domestic life and property and casualty insurance companies.

Given the reduction in the Premium Tax to 1.5% and the previously stated assumptions, only companies paying the Premium Tax would be affected. The \$4,556,824 collected in 1997 would be reduced by \$1,139,206 if taxed at 1.5% rather than 2.0%. These companies would not be able to deduct this amount from their adjusted tax base (see Step 2 above), resulting in an annual state increase of \$51,264 in SNIT revenue (\$1,139,206 x 4.5%).

*Net impact:* The table below summarizes the net annual impact upon full implementation in FY 2005 of reducing the Premium Tax rate from 2.0% to 1.5%:

<b>Affected Tax</b>	<b>Change</b>
Insurance Premium Tax	(\$26,819,278)
Corporate Gross Income tax	\$0
Supplemental Net Income Tax	\$51,264
<b>NET IMPACT</b>	<b>(\$26,768,014)</b>

The projected impact of this bill is a \$26,768,014 decrease in state General Fund revenues. It must be noted that reducing the Premium Tax will reduce the cost of doing business in other states for Indiana's domestic insurance companies. If these companies remain in Indiana and prosper or if new business is attracted, corporate and personal income tax revenues could increase.

The above estimates do not reflect insurance companies shifting from paying the gross income tax to the Premium Tax. The impact of this shift is currently being examined and this analysis will be updated when the analysis is complete.

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:**

**Explanation of Local Revenues:** If a lower Premium Tax rate helps Indiana's domestic insurance companies expand, corporate and personal income tax collections could be increased, benefitting counties with local option income taxes.

If an insurance company relocated outside the state because of lower Premium Tax rates in other states relative to Indiana's 2.0% rate, local property tax burdens could be shifted to other taxpayers.

**State Agencies Affected:** Department of Revenue, Department of Insurance.

**Local Agencies Affected:**

**Information Sources:** Department of Revenue, Department of Insurance.